

147 colleges, recognised by Medical Council of India and 21 new medical colleges permitted by Central Government to conduct M.B.B.S. course.

(b) As per the information received from the Medical Council of India, approximately 17,000 students are passing out from medical colleges in India every year.

(c) and (d) On behalf of Medical Council of India, A.F. Ferguson and Co. carried out a study to determine the cost of medical education for M.B.B.S. course and in its report of March, 1998 indicated that the average cost per undergraduate student per annum varies from Rs. 88,000/- to Rs. 3.20 lakhs, as per the management of the College by Government or Private body and location of the college and other facilities made available to the institution.

UNICEF Report on AIDS

3460. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) wheather India has been shown as the most AIDS infected country, in the world, as per the UNICEF report released recently in regard to the progress made by various nations;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise, alongwith the percentage of Indian population infected with AIDS, as per the UNICEF Report; and

(c) whether Government have made any independent assessment in this regard so as to konw the actual number of petients, as the number of AIDS infected people shown in the UNICEF Report seem to be much more and may create panic in the public?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (c) No, Sir. The UNICEF report has not shown state- wise, prevalence of HIV infections. However, Nationwide sentinel surveillance carried out by the Government shows that the estimated number of HIV infections was 3.5 Million as on mid 1998.

Population Stabilization Policy

3461. SHRI K. KALAVEKATA RAO:

DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO:

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Madhya Pradesh Government is giving a lead in population control by denying all the benefits and facilities under Government schemes to parents giving birth to third child after January 26, 2000; and

(b) if so, the seriousness of Union Government to announce such a new population stabilization policy and extend it to cover all Union Government Offices and elected offices like Panchayats, cooperative institutions, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) Population Policy adopted by Government of Madhya Pradesh envisages that Persons having more than two children after January 26, 2001 would not be eligible for contesting election for panchayats, local bodies, mandis or cooperatives in the State. In case, they get elected and in the mean time they have the third child, they would be disqualified for that post.

(b) The National Population Policy 2000 adopted in February 2000 affirms commitment of Government towards voluntary and informed choice and consent of citizens while availing of reproductive health care service, and continuation of the target free approach in administering family planning services.

A Central Bill, titled the Constitution Seventy-Ninth (Amendment) Bill, 1992 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on December, 1992. The Bill seeks to amend the Directive Principles of State Policy to provide that the State shall endeavour to promote population control and the small family norm and to include in the Fundamental Duties, a duty to promote and adopt the small family norm. It is also proposed that a person shall be disqualified for being chosen as, and for being, a member of either House of Parliament or either House of Legislature of a State, if he has more than two children.

While recommending the Bill for passage, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development also recommended that the Government may convene a meeting of leaders of various political parties in Parliament to ensure the smooth passage of the Bill.

Accordingly, meetings of the political parties were held under the chairpersonship of MOS(H and FW) on 14th August, 1997 and in December 1999, to evolve a consensus for its smooth passage in the Parliament. However, so far, there is no consensus among the major political parties, on the subject.